



Resolution # HSRA 12-28

Interagency Agreement with the California Department of Conservation

Whereas the California High-Speed Rail Act authorized the planning and construction of an intercity high-speed train (HST) that links the state's major population centers, including Sacramento, the San Francisco Bay Area, the Central Valley, Los Angeles, the Inland Empire, Orange County, and San Diego.

Whereas under the enabling legislation, the Authority was created to oversee the development and implementation of the project.

Whereas as part of the planning process, the Authority is both the project sponsor and the lead agency for purposes of state CEQA requirements.

Whereas as part of the CEQA process, the Authority adopted a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan concurrently with certifying the 2005 Program EIR/EIS and with certifying the 2012 Program EIR to document that mitigation strategies identified in the Program EIR/EISs will be implemented to avoid, minimize, or reduce any potentially significant environmental impacts.

Whereas a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan was adopted concurrently with the Merced to Fresno Section project-level Final EIR/EIS to document that project-level mitigation measures identified in the EIR/EIS will be implemented to avoid, minimize, or reduce any potentially significant environmental impacts.

Whereas to mitigate for the loss of important farmlands due to the project, the Merced to Fresno Final EIR/EIS Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan includes steps to avoid and minimize the project footprint during design and construction, and a detailed mitigation measure, AG-MM#1, to establish agricultural conservation easements to permanently preserve important farmlands for agricultural use .

Whereas the Authority wishes to enter into an agreement with the California Department of Conservation's California Farmland Conservancy Program for developing and implementing an agricultural lands mitigation program needed for obtaining agricultural conservation easements between Merced to Fresno, as well as for upcoming HST project sections between Fresno to Bakersfield, and San Jose to Merced.

Therefore it is resolved,

1. The Board authorizes the Chief Executive Officer, or his designate, to enter into an interagency agreement with the California Department of Conservation's California Farmland Conservancy Program for developing and implementing an agricultural lands mitigation program needed for

obtaining agricultural conservation easements between Merced to Fresno, Fresno to Bakersfield, and San Jose to Merced.

2. The Board authorizes the Chief Executive Officer, or his designate, to enter into this interagency agreement with the California Department of Conservation's California Farmland Conservancy Program for an initial five year term and a \$20 million budget.

Vote:

Date:

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November 14, 2012 Board Meeting
Agenda Item # 5